



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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**NORTH AMERICAN WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMITTEE
SELECTS RECIPIENTS OF ITS 1995 WETLANDS CONSERVATION AWARDS**

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee recently announced recipients of its 1995 International Canvasback Award and National Great Blue Heron Award.

The International Canvasback Award is the highest award presented on behalf of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. It is given to individuals, corporations, organizations, and others making exceptional long-term contributions to the implementation and continuation of the plan in North America. This year's recipient is **Kenneth F. Wich**, retired director of New York's Division of Wildlife.

Wich has a long list of accomplishments to his credit in support of the North American Plan. He has served as chairman of the Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Joint Venture, state member of the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, a leader on the Atlantic Flyway Council, and a member of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee. Wich helped redraft the 1994 plan update and supported the funding of Canadian projects. His commitment to the conservation of natural resources and to the plan are internationally acknowledged.

The National Great Blue Heron Award is presented to primary participants in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan whose long-term contributions have significantly benefitted waterfowl and other migratory bird populations. Sharing the spotlight for 1995 are **Minnesota Governor Arne Carlson**, **Ohio Division of Wildlife**, **Westvaco Corporation of New York**, **Dow Chemical Company of Texas**, and **Daniel Chapin**, retired vice president of government affairs for the California Waterfowl Association.

Throughout his public service career, Governor Carlson has demonstrated a concern for wetland conservation. As state auditor, he was a strong advocate of the Fish and Wildlife Service's small wetlands acquisition program. After becoming

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governor, Carlson established a statewide no-net-loss of wetlands policy and supported Minnesota's Wetland Conservation Act. His consistent budgetary support of the Reinvest in Minnesota program has allowed acquisition of wetland and grassland easements. He also advocates partnerships to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands in support of the North American Plan.

The Ohio Division of Wildlife has been involved in the completion of more than 200 projects protecting, creating, and restoring some 12,000 acres of wetlands. These projects involved partnerships with Federal agencies, conservation organizations, and businesses. All wetlands-dependent species benefit from these projects, including black ducks, a species of special concern under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. In addition, the division has dedicated \$50,000 annually for wetlands restoration on private lands totalling more than 1,000 acres at 136 sites.

Although headquartered in New York, Westvaco's commitment to natural resources conservation stretches nationwide. The Westvaco Wildlife Management Area was established through a 20-year memorandum of understanding with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. Approximately 3,200 acres of bottomland hardwoods and wetlands have been dedicated to date. The area will ultimately encompass 6,200 acres. Sustainable development is a principal concept of this plan. In South Carolina, Westvaco is a partner in a consortium to preserve 350,000 acres of critical habitat, including 17,000 acres of Westvaco-managed forestland. An 8,400-acre site in West Virginia provides a center for independent research into the impacts of commercial forestry on ecosystem elements, another testimony to Westvaco's dedication to improving the environment as well as business.

Dow has demonstrated its commitment to natural resources by protecting and restoring more than 60,000 acres of wetlands on or near its properties, investing several million dollars to protect critical wetlands nationwide, and joining partnerships to preserve and enhance more than 380,000 acres of wetland habitat.

Daniel Chapin is receiving the National Great Blue Heron Award for his outstanding achievements on behalf of wetlands and waterfowl. He played a significant role in the 1992 passage of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, which guaranteed the successful implementation of the water supply objective of the

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Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture. Chapin led the effort to develop the implementation plan, organized the management board to ensure the most efficient functioning of the group, and initiated wetlands projects such as the Ricelands Habitat Partnership and the Yolo Basin Feasibility Study. Much of his contribution to wetlands protection has been made as a volunteer.

Acknowledging the contributions of these newest awardees, Fish and Wildlife Service Director Mollie Beattie said, "The natural world has benefitted from the efforts of these individuals and organizations. As part of the natural world, we all owe them a debt of gratitude."